

MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2026 AT 7:30PM

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Present:

Cllrs Richards, Larkin, Davis, Russell, Sheppard, Baxter-Smith & Baylis

In attendance:

Anna Blyth (Deputy Clerk)

1 member of the public (part of the meeting)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Boon & Jenkinson. Cllr Darrah also gave her apologies prior to the meeting.

Cllr Sheppard voted in favour of accepting the reasons for absence, seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited.

None declared.

2. MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Parish Council Planning Committee Meeting held on 17 February 2026 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Larkin, seconded Cllr Sheppard and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

3. PUBLIC SESSION

Members of the public have the right to speak for up to three minutes at the Chair's discretion on issues concerning the Parish providing the Clerk has prior notification.

A member of the public addressed the Committee regarding the current planning applications at Pullen's Farm.

During his three-minute statement, the speaker raised a number of concerns about the proposals and the information submitted in support of them, including the potential impact on local environment and amenity. To support his comments, he shared a PowerPoint presentation with Cllrs which included photographs illustrating the issues he had highlighted in relation to activity at the site and the surrounding area. He requested that the Committee consider refusal of the applications. The Committee noted the representation.

The Chair proposed that the applications for Pullen's Farm be brought forward and discussed first. This proposal was unanimously agreed by all Cllrs present.

4. PLANNING

a) Applications/Submissions:

Planning Application:	26/00466/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Variation of Condition 7 of Planning Permission 13/00460/FULL - (Workshop doors to remain open during working hours)</u>
Location:	Middle Barn, Pullen's Farm, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8ED
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	The PC request that TWBC seek an independent noise assessment as the implied decibel levels do not reflect the anecdotal noise levels experienced on site. The PC note the reason for doors to be open during working hours is in part related to the use of chemicals and spray paints within the workshop and would suggest that the occupant consider investing in an effective LEV system to minimise harm to the workers and minimise emissions to the atmosphere. The PC also comment that the noise assessment provided does not reflect best practice in that the TWA represents only one hour of sampling. They would suggest that a noise assessment be carried out to cover the intended times of operation of the business over a number of days to truly reflect the impact on the local area.

Planning Application:	26/00475/FULL
Proposal:	<u>(Part-retrospective) Stationing of 2 No. shipping containers; Proposed stationing of 1 No. additional shipping container and new screening</u>
Location:	Pullen's Farm, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8ED
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	Horsmonden Parish Council has considered this planning application at Pullen's Farm and recommends refusal of the application. The site lies in the setting of Pullen's Farmhouse (Grade II listed), and the cumulative intensification of commercial and industrial-type uses, containers, parking areas and associated paraphernalia is, in our view, harmful to the significance and rural setting of this designated heritage asset. This is contrary to the heritage provisions of the Tunbridge Wells development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which require great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets and their setting, and only allow harm where it is clearly and convincingly justified and outweighed by public benefits. In these instances we do not believe that there is any public or local benefit to support this Policy. The pattern of retrospective applications, together with the apparent spread of containers, external storage and ad hoc works, raises serious concern about unlawful development and non-compliance with previous consents and conditions. We request that the Borough Council confirms whether there are any live or historic enforcement cases on this land and, if so, that these are fully taken into account. In line with the Councils own Planning Enforcement policy, the Parish Council considers that formal enforcement action is now necessary to regularise the site, secure removal of unauthorised development, and address any potential pollution and land management issues arising from the current use of the fields and hardstanding. The proposals also fail to respect the rural landscape character of this part of Horsmonden parish. The incremental industrialisation of former agricultural buildings and open land through intensified Class E usage and the introduction of B2 uses, expanded parking, containers and fencing conflicts with local plan policies seeking to protect the countryside, safeguard landscape character and prevent

	inappropriate development outside defined settlement limits. The development appears at odds with the objectives of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan and associated landscape and design policies, which require high quality, context sensitive development that conserves and enhances the rural environment. We note substantial local concern regarding noise, traffic, visual impact, heritage harm and the general deterioration of the sites appearance and management. We do not consider that the applicants submissions demonstrate that these impacts have been satisfactorily addressed or that the cumulative effects of all the proposals have been properly assessed. For these reasons, Horsmonden Parish Council considers that the proposals do not represent appropriate or sustainable development at this sensitive rural and heritage adjacent location. We therefore recommend refusal of this application and request that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: • undertakes a comprehensive enforcement review • secures remediation and tidying of the land directly referring to existing planning conditions. • fully investigates the apparent pollution of land and water courses and environmental management concerns associated with the current operations and associated chemicals currently in use on site. • we would suggest that within the application for change of use an assessment be made into the pollution control measures that should be implemented by the business as well as a review of any current pollution incidents that may be evident on site. • investigate the vehicles on site that appear to suggest the site may require suitable Environmental Permitting for any waste storage activities. In our view, only a plan led, heritage-led and landscape led approach to any future proposals at Pullen's Farm would be capable of complying with the NPPF and the adopted and emerging policies of the Tunbridge Wells development plan.
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Planning Application:	26/00464/FULL
Proposal:	<u>(Retrospective) Change of use of workshop to Class E; relocation of 5no. containers; creation of parking area; landscaping alterations</u>

Location:	Middle Barns Workshop, Pullens Farm, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8ED
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	Horsmonden Parish Council has considered this planning application at Pullen's Farm and recommends refusal of the application. The site lies in the setting of Pullen's Farmhouse (Grade II listed), and the cumulative intensification of commercial and industrial-type uses, containers, parking areas and associated paraphernalia is, in our view, harmful to the significance and rural setting of this designated heritage asset. This is contrary to the heritage provisions of the Tunbridge Wells development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which require great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets and their setting, and only allow harm where it is clearly and convincingly justified and outweighed by public benefits. In these instances we do not believe that there is any public or local benefit to support this Policy. The pattern of retrospective applications, together with the apparent spread of containers, external storage and ad hoc works, raises serious concern about unlawful development and non-compliance with previous consents and conditions. We request that the Borough Council confirms whether there are any live or historic enforcement cases on this land and, if so, that these are fully taken into account. In line with the Councils own Planning Enforcement policy, the Parish Council considers that formal enforcement action is now necessary to regularise the site, secure removal of unauthorised development, and address any potential pollution and land management issues arising from the current use of the fields and hardstanding. The proposals also fail to respect the rural landscape character of this part of Horsmonden parish. The incremental industrialisation of former agricultural buildings and open land through intensified Class E usage and the introduction of B2 uses, expanded parking, containers and fencing conflicts with local plan policies seeking to protect the countryside, safeguard landscape character and prevent inappropriate development outside defined settlement limits. The development appears at odds with the objectives of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan and associated landscape and design policies, which require high quality, context sensitive

	development that conserves and enhances the rural environment. We note substantial local concern regarding noise, traffic, visual impact, heritage harm and the general deterioration of the sites appearance and management. We do not consider that the applicants submissions demonstrate that these impacts have been satisfactorily addressed or that the cumulative effects of all the proposals have been properly assessed. For these reasons, Horsmonden Parish Council considers that the proposals do not represent appropriate or sustainable development at this sensitive rural and heritage adjacent location. We therefore recommend refusal of this application and request that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: • undertakes a comprehensive enforcement review • secures remediation and tidying of the land directly referring to existing planning conditions. • fully investigates the apparent pollution of land and water courses and environmental management concerns associated with the current operations and associated chemicals currently in use on site. • we would suggest that within the application for change of use an assessment be made into the pollution control measures that should be implemented by the business as well as a review of any current pollution incidents that may be evident on site. • investigate the vehicles on site that appear to suggest the site may require suitable Environmental Permitting for any waste storage activities. In our view, only a plan led, heritage-led and landscape led approach to any future proposals at Pullen's Farm would be capable of complying with the NPPF and the adopted and emerging policies of the Tunbridge Wells development plan.
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Planning Application:	26/00467/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Variation of Condition 6 of Planning Permission 16/06927/FULL - (removal of condition to allow the workshop doors to remain open during operating hours)</u>
Location:	Pullens Barn, Pullens Farm, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8ED
Recommendation	Refusal

Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	The PC recommend refusal on the grounds that the position of the barn would mean that opening of the roller shutter doors directs the noise from the barn towards the residential area. The PC also comment that the noise assessment provided does not reflect best practice in that the TWA represents only one hour of sampling which appears to have been conducted in the middle of the day. They would suggest that a noise assessment be carried out to cover the intended times of operation of the business over a number of days to truly reflect the impact on the local area. The PC also request clarification of the type of business use currently operating within the building.

Planning Application:	26/00450/FULL
Proposal:	<u>(Retrospective) Change of use of building from class E to class B2; use of external area for storage; installation of acoustic fencing; removal of a container</u>
Location:	The Granary, Pullens Farm, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8ED
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	Horsmonden Parish Council has considered this planning application at Pullen's Farm and recommends refusal of the application. The site lies in the setting of Pullen's Farmhouse (Grade II listed), and the cumulative intensification of commercial and industrial-type uses, containers, parking areas and associated paraphernalia is, in our view, harmful to the significance and rural setting of this designated heritage asset. This is contrary to the heritage provisions of the Tunbridge Wells development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which require great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets and their setting, and only allow harm where it is clearly and convincingly justified and outweighed by public benefits. In these instances we do not believe that there is any public or local benefit to support this Policy. The pattern of retrospective applications, together with the apparent spread of containers, external storage and ad hoc works, raises serious concern about unlawful development and non-compliance with previous consents and conditions. We request that the Borough Council confirms whether there are any

	live or historic enforcement cases on this land and, if so, that these are fully taken into account. In line with the Councils own Planning Enforcement policy, the Parish Council considers that formal enforcement action is now necessary to regularise the site, secure removal of unauthorised development, and address any potential pollution and land management issues arising from the current use of the fields and hardstanding. The proposals also fail to respect the rural landscape character of this part of Horsmonden parish. The incremental industrialisation of former agricultural buildings and open land through intensified Class E usage and the introduction of B2 uses, expanded parking, containers and fencing conflicts with local plan policies seeking to protect the countryside, safeguard landscape character and prevent inappropriate development outside defined settlement limits. The development appears at odds with the objectives of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan and associated landscape and design policies, which require high quality, context sensitive development that conserves and enhances the rural environment. We note substantial local concern regarding noise, traffic, visual impact, heritage harm and the general deterioration of the sites appearance and management. We do not consider that the applicants submissions demonstrate that these impacts have been satisfactorily addressed or that the cumulative effects of all the proposals have been properly assessed. For these reasons, Horsmonden Parish Council considers that the proposals do not represent appropriate or sustainable development at this sensitive rural and heritage adjacent location. We therefore recommend refusal of this application and request that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: • undertakes a comprehensive enforcement review • secures remediation and tidying of the land directly referring to existing planning conditions. • fully investigates the apparent pollution of land and water courses and environmental management concerns associated with the current operations and associated chemicals currently in use on site. • we would suggest that within the application for change of use an assessment be made into the pollution control
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	measures that should be implemented by the business as well as a review of any current pollution incidents that may be evident on site. investigate the vehicles on site that appear to suggest the site may require suitable Environmental Permitting for any waste storage activities. In our view, only a plan led, heritage-led and landscape led approach to any future proposals at Pullen's Farm would be capable of complying with the NPPF and the adopted and emerging policies of the Tunbridge Wells development plan.
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Planning Application:	26/00465/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Formalisation of parking and yard areas (retrospective).</u>
Location:	Pullens Barn, Pullens Farm, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8ED
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	Horsmonden Parish Council has considered this planning application at Pullen's Farm and recommends refusal of the application. The site lies in the setting of Pullen's Farmhouse (Grade II listed), and the cumulative intensification of commercial and industrial-type uses, containers, parking areas and associated paraphernalia is, in our view, harmful to the significance and rural setting of this designated heritage asset. This is contrary to the heritage provisions of the Tunbridge Wells development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which require great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets and their setting, and only allow harm where it is clearly and convincingly justified and outweighed by public benefits. In these instances we do not believe that there is any public or local benefit to support this Policy. The pattern of retrospective applications, together with the apparent spread of containers, external storage and ad hoc works, raises serious concern about unlawful development and non-compliance with previous consents and conditions. We request that the Borough Council confirms whether there are any live or historic enforcement cases on this land and, if so, that these are fully taken into account. In line with the Councils own Planning Enforcement policy, the Parish Council considers that formal enforcement action is now necessary to regularise the site, secure removal of unauthorised development, and address any potential pollution and land management issues arising from

	the current use of the fields and hardstanding. The proposals also fail to respect the rural landscape character of this part of Horsmonden parish. The incremental industrialisation of former agricultural buildings and open land through intensified Class E usage and the introduction of B2 uses, expanded parking, containers and fencing conflicts with local plan policies seeking to protect the countryside, safeguard landscape character and prevent inappropriate development outside defined settlement limits. The development appears at odds with the objectives of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan and associated landscape and design policies, which require high quality, context sensitive development that conserves and enhances the rural environment. We note substantial local concern regarding noise, traffic, visual impact, heritage harm and the general deterioration of the sites appearance and management. We do not consider that the applicants submissions demonstrate that these impacts have been satisfactorily addressed or that the cumulative effects of all the proposals have been properly assessed. For these reasons, Horsmonden Parish Council considers that the proposals do not represent appropriate or sustainable development at this sensitive rural and heritage adjacent location. We therefore recommend refusal of this application and request that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: • undertakes a comprehensive enforcement review • secures remediation and tidying of the land directly referring to existing planning conditions. • fully investigates the apparent pollution of land and water courses and environmental management concerns associated with the current operations and associated chemicals currently in use on site. • we would suggest that within the application for change of use an assessment be made into the pollution control measures that should be implemented by the business as well as a review of any current pollution incidents that may be evident on site. • investigate the vehicles on site that appear to suggest the site may require suitable Environmental Permitting for any waste storage activities.
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Planning Application:	26/00280/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Replacement pool house with outdoor kitchen and landscaping.</u>
Location:	Lampkyns, School House Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BJ
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Davis; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous
Comments	Reasonable development of the site. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability Policy.

Planning Application:	26/00444/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Change of use of a small internal room (former hairdresser) to ancillary residential accommodation within the existing dwellinghouse (Class C3).</u>
Location:	Manchester House, The Heath, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8HT
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	Horsmonden Parish Council recommend refusal of application 26/00444/FULL, which seeks the change of use of a small commercial room (formerly a hairdresser) to ancillary residential accommodation at Manchester House, The Heath, Horsmonden. Loss of Commercial Space Undermines Village Sustainability The Heath is a small but important local centre within Horsmonden, and the loss of even modest commercial floorspace has a disproportionate impact on the villages long term sustainability. Rural settlements rely on a critical mass of local services to remain viable, especially as Horsmonden is already experiencing significant new residential development. Removing commercial units at the same time as population growth directly contradicts the principles of sustainable development. Relevant policy support: • NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) • Requires planning decisions to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, including the retention and development of local services and community facilities.

	• Paragraphs on supporting a prosperous rural economy emphasise the need to retain local business space and avoid unnecessary loss of commercial uses in villages. Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (adopted and emerging) • Policies protecting local centres, employment space and rural services require the Council to resist the loss of commercial premises unless robustly justified. • The plan emphasises that rural settlements must maintain a mix of uses to remain sustainable and reduce reliance on car travel to larger towns. Kent County Council economic and rural development principles • Encourage the safeguarding of small scale commercial premises that support local employment and reduce rural service decline. The applicant has not demonstrated that the commercial unit is no longer viable, no longer needed, or unsuitable for continued commercial use, which is normally required for change of use proposals of this type.
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Planning Application:	26/00479/FULL
Proposal:	<u>(Retrospective) Erection of close-board fence to front garden</u>
Location:	Lockie Cottage, Gun Back Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8NL
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Sheppard; seconded Cllr Davis. Carried.
Comments	Whilst the PC are sympathetic to the rights of privacy, they would prefer that the fence height was in line with the local precedent of a maximum height of 1.2 metres adjacent to the highway.

5. UPDATE / FURTHER ACTIONS RE APPLICATION 24/00078/HYBRID BASSETTS FARM

26/00298/MOD106 – Affordable Housing Clause

The Deputy Clerk reported that the Clerk had raised further queries with the TWBC Case Officer regarding the modification of the affordable housing clause of the S106 agreement attached to 15/505340/OUT. The email had been shared with Cllrs prior to the meeting. No response has been received to date.

24/00078/HYBRID – S106 Queries

A response is also awaited from Carlos Hone regarding S106 queries relating to 24/00078/HYBRID, following the PC's most recent letter sent on 4th March.

24/00078/HYBRID – Orchard Replanting

The Deputy Clerk showed an email from Judith Aston Associates, which has been uploaded to the planning portal, outlining the replanting process at Bassetts Farm following the accidental removal of the existing orchard. The email had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs reviewed the comments and raised no further observations.

6. FEEDBACK AND UPDATES ON PLANNING ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

No specific updates had been received in time for the meeting. Work is ongoing for current planning enforcement matters, however updates are limited.

7. APPLICATIONS GRANTED AND REFUSED

Granted

None

Refused

None

8. OTHER PLANNING MATTERS (Discussion only – No decisions)

- **Land Behind Olivers Court**

Cllr Russell reported that responsibility for the land behind Olivers Court has now been assumed by the residents.

- **Goudhurst Road Footway**

It was noted that the new footway on Goudhurst Road, providing access to the Bassetts Farm development, appears to be open. Concerns remain regarding a spring that continues to flow and soak the footway. The Deputy Clerk advised that the Clerk has queried whether the footway should be open while these issues are unresolved and a response is awaited.

- **Bockingfold Solar Farm Update**

Cllr Russell provided a brief update following a recent meeting confirming that delivery of the transformer has been delayed. The delivery will involve a very large vehicle passing through the village, and the PC will be informed once a date is confirmed.

The Deputy Clerk reported that Renvolt (previously Valtalia) have requested a meeting with the PC to discuss the information boards requested for footpaths WT327 and WT328 upon completion of the site. Cllrs Russell and Sheppard indicated they would attempt to take photographs of similar information boards to bring to the next meeting on 13th April.

- **Brenchley Road Site – Revised Application**

The Deputy Clerk advised that a revised planning application has been received for the Brenchley Road site (reference 25/02758/REM). This application will be added to the agenda for the April meeting but is available to be viewed by Cllrs now.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm.